

HCS HB 1189 -- HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

SPONSOR: Wood

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 19 to 1.

This bill requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop, by July 1, 2015, a high school graduation policy that allows a student to fulfill one unit of academic credit with an agriculture or career and technical education course approved by the student's school district for up to four credits, one each in communications arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The substitution may not be made for a course that requires an end-of-course statewide assessment. The policy must be in addition to the optional waiver of one unit of academic credit for a three-unit career and technical program of studies.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that allowing the substitution of a vocational or career course can help a student who is likely to go directly into the workforce, without lowering the level of rigor expected of them. It will help enforce the connection between what you learn in school and how it applies to the world outside.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Wood; Willard Haley, Eldon R-I Career Center; Jon Wilson, Missouri Association for Career and Technical Education; Jerry Hobbs, Cole County R-I School District; Missouri Farm Bureau; Keith Davis, Missouri Council of Career and Technical Administrators; and Missouri National Education Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that comprehensive high schools are different from vocational schools. This would work better in a vocational school.

Testifying against the bill was Miranda Avant-Eliot.